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US first lady wins hearts of young and old

BY HELEN GRANGE AND
OWN CORRESPONDENT

American first lady Hillary Clinton, in a striking pink suit, was the epitome of grace and composure on a visit to Soweto yesterday, where she captured the hearts of both young and old.

Hundreds of women and schoolchildren cheered Clinton when she arrived with her daughter Chelsea at the Entandweni Lower Primary School.

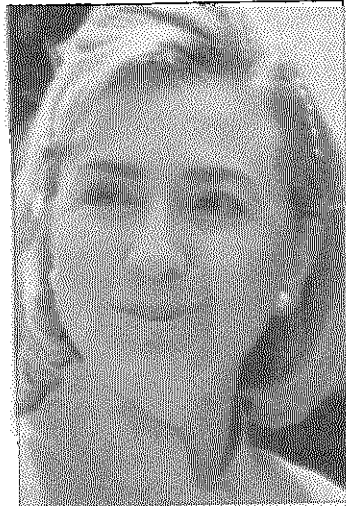
She was ushered into a classroom, where she confidently took on the role of teacher to pupils learning English through an interactive radio programme.

At the Hector Petersen memorial she was joined by ANC stalwart Walter Sisulu, Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale and his wife Judy, as well as veteran politician Helen Suzman.

After viewing the photo exhibition of the 1976 student uprising and laying a wreath at the memorial, Clinton said she mourned for those youths "who did not live to see this day in this country".

"But in the faces of the children I saw this morning, I hope there is the consolation that what they fought and died for has come to pass."

She said she had come to South Africa to thank President



In the pink ... Hillary Clinton.

Nelson Mandela and all South Africans for setting an example to the world of how to create freedom and democracy.

Clinton travels to Cape Town today for a benefit banquet, hosted by Mandela, on Robben Island.

Guests will pay R250 000 a couple for the privilege of attending the evening's event, organiser Ahmed Kathrada said.

Between 70 and 80 guests - "not all of them paying", he said - were due to attend, easily totting up several million rands to assist struggling former political prison-

ers and help finance the Robben Island museum.

Among the other international guests will be comedian Bill Cosby, his wife Camille and their daughter Ensa, singer Quincy Jones and United Nations secretary-general Kofi Annan.

Kathrada declined to release the names of the paying guests, but it is reliably understood that most of them are from the corporate world. A "poor man's banquet", at R10 000 a table, with the Cosbys is planned for Sun City on Friday night. The funds raised will go to the same cause.

Clinton will also speak at the University of Cape Town and attend, with Archbishop Desmond Tutu, a meeting of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. She leaves South Africa on Friday.

It is the first time a US first lady has been on a goodwill mission to Africa. She is scheduled to visit Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Uganda and Eritrea.

■ Sapa reports that Clinton will write about her trip for Vogue magazine, and renowned photographer Annie Leibowitz was in Johannesburg yesterday to take pictures. Leibowitz made a name for herself in the 1960s for unique portraits of famous musicians and film stars for Rolling Stone magazine.

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